GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1534
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2015
Development of Agriculture Sector
Mufti Smt. Mehbooba

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had constituted a Commission for suggesting ways and means to sort out the problems being faced by the agriculture sector in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the follow up action taken by the Government to implement the major recommendations of the Commission for development of the agriculture sector;

(d) the achievement made so far in this regard; and

(e) the mechanism put in place to monitor/oversee the development of agriculture sector?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a) & (b) Government had constituted a National Commission on Farmers under the Chairmanship of Shri Sompal in the year 2004, which was subsequently reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan vide Resolution No. 8-2/2003-Policy (ES) dated 18.11.2004.

The Commission submitted five reports to the Government. The major recommendations of the Commission contained in the five reports were included in the 'Draft National Policy for Farmers'; submitted by the Commission itself.

Based on the 'Draft National Policy for Farmers' submitted by the Commission, the Government approved the 'National Policy for Farmers, 2007' (NPF 2007). The NPF-2007 aims to improve economic viability of farming and increase net income of farmers. The Policy provisions in NPF-2007 include, inter-alia, (i) asset reforms in respect of land, water, livestock, fisheries and bio-resources; (ii) supply of good quality seeds and disease-free planting material, (iii) issue of soil health passbooks to the farmers and integrated pest management system; (iv) region and crop specific implements and machinery; (v) support services for women; (vi) timely, adequate and easy reach of institutional credit at reasonable interest rates and farmer-friendly insurance instruments; (vii) support services and inputs like application of frontier technologies;
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(viii) agricultural bio-security system; (ix) use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and setting up of farm schools to revitalize agricultural extension; (x) coverage of farmers under a comprehensive national social security scheme; (xi) effective implementation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) across the country and establishing community foodgrain banks; (xii) development of agricultural market infrastructure and terminal markets for agriculture; (xiii) curriculum reforms in agricultural universities; (xiv) special categories of farming like organic farming and contract farming; (xv) rural non-farm employment initiative for farm households; and (xvi) integrated approach for rural energy, etc.

(c) & (d): An Inter-Ministerial Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the Principal Adviser in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for preparation of a Plan of Action for Operationalisation of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007. The Committee comprised officers of Central Ministries/Departments concerned as members. Another Inter-Ministerial Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (Policy), Department of Agriculture & Cooperation to monitor the progress of implementation of these 201 action points. The Plan of Action (PoA) for operationalisation of policy provisions was circulated in October, 2008 to different Ministries/Departments and State/UTs Governments for taking necessary follow up action.

Of the 201 number of action points identified, 192 number have already been implemented as of date.

(e): The schemes/programmes being implemented by the Central and State Governments have within their guidelines inbuilt mechanism to monitor/oversee the agriculture sector. Further, the Department has initiated action to revisit the existing policy, which is

now almost 8 years old.

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